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SUBJECT: REPORT OF U.S.- RUSSIA MANPADS EXPERTS MEETING  
JULY 9-10, WASHINGTON, D.C.

REF: A. A. STATE 152989 B. STATE 100646 C. STATE 112304  
[1](#)B. D. STATE 32213 E. STATE 33076 F. STATE 27306

Classified By: EUR/PRA Acting Director Kathleen Morenski  
for reasons 1.4 (a,b,c,d)

#### Summary

[1](#)1. (S/NF) On the same week as the successful U.S.-Russia Presidential Summit in Moscow, the United States and Russia held their sixth Experts Meeting under their bilateral Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS) Arrangement July 9-10 in Washington. Several items of interest were covered, including: 1. a framework for the exchange of information on domestic MANPADS destruction; 2. the risk of diversion of MANPADS from Venezuela to the FARC; 3. illicit MANPADS proliferation from Eritrea; 4. potential cooperation on MANPADS destruction projects with other states; and 5. next steps to facilitate the transfer of Russian-made Finnish MANPADS to the U.S. for countermeasures testing. The Russian side again requested U.S. help preventing the spread of MANPADS in the Caucasus, in particular information on Polish-supplied MANPADS to Georgia that were discovered in Chechnya following the August 2008 conflict. In response to our non-paper on the subject, the Russian MFA informed us it had begun a dialogue with the Polish government. The next Experts Meeting was tentatively scheduled for fall 2010 in Moscow, at the earliest. The U.S. delegation was co-chaired by Steven Costner (Deputy Director of PM/WRA) and Anita Friedt (Director of EUR/PRA). The Russian delegation was chaired by Col. Oleg Skabara from the MOD. See para 31 for a full delegation list. End Summary.

#### Information Exchanges

[1](#)2. (S) Both sides provided the details of their quarterly MANPADS transfers. The U.S. submitted its first quarter report, which reported no transfers from January 1-March 31, prior to the meeting. The U.S. provided its second quarter report (due by September 30), which covered April 1 through June 30, during the meeting, which also reported no transfers. The Russians provided their first quarter exchange prior to the meeting, which reported the transfer of 100 IGLA-S missiles and 90 associated gripstocks to Venezuela. (see below para for more details on the Venezuela discussion).

#### Destruction Information Exchange

[1](#)3. (S) The U.S. side raised the issue of the exchange of information on the destruction of obsolete MANPADS, referencing the U.S. non-paper which detailed our proposal

for the exchange that was provided to the GOR in advance of the meeting. The Russian delegation acknowledged receiving the U.S. non-paper and expressed gratitude for starting a dialogue on this topic. The sides agreed in principle that the exchange should take place on an annual basis, that both sides would consider reporting information starting with 2005, and that information on the quantity and type of missiles and gripstocks destroyed should be included. The sides also agreed that the quantities - but not types - of batteries should be reported in this exchange.

14. (S) The Russian delegation expressed a willingness to discuss the issue further, but insisted that they needed more time to clear the U.S. proposal with other executive agencies within the Russian government. The Russians recognized the U.S. has taken serious steps on this issue and suggested that the sides continue this dialogue through diplomatic channels.

#### Venezuela MANPADS transfers

15. (S) In response to the U.S. paper outlining U.S. concerns about the possibility of diversion to non state actors of IGLA-S systems being delivered to the Government of Venezuela (GOV), the Russian delegation stated that they understood the concerns raised at high levels between our Secretary of State and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as between Russian Ambassador Kislyak and WHA A/S Shannon. Skabara assured the U.S. delegation that Russian law provides specific measures to prevent illegal transfers to third parties. He then stated that the issues raised in the paper were reflected in end user checks as well as in the contract between the GOR and GOV, and that the GOR has required an end-user regime that guarantees that transfers to third parties will not take place. Skabara said that the U.S. delegation had seen how well the Russians secure their stockpiles and assured the U.S. that these same controls were written into the contract with Venezuela. Along with this, the GOR has had dialogue with the GOV evaluating the GOV's physical security of the systems, which specifically featured a discussion about the FARC. GOR assured the U.S. side that transfers from Venezuela to the FARC cannot take place.

16. (S) Questions and comparisons were raised by the U.S. side about Russian ammunition, sold to Venezuela, and found in possession of the FARC. Skabara first suggested that the ammunition did not come from Russia, but was probably a sale from "unlicensed production" a suggestion that it was manufactured in a third country without appropriate permits from Russia. When the U.S. side pointed out that the ammunition carried factory stamps, and that we provided this information, the Russians responded that the meeting was to discuss MANPADS, not ammunition, and that these are different weapons and the approach, scale, and control applied to them are different. He said the U.S. did not provide enough information to the Russians on the confiscated ammunition for them to fully investigate the discovery; however Russia is carrying out an investigation. He added that it would be "impossible" for a similar scenario to take place with MANPADS, as they have an ongoing dialogue with Venezuela that allows them to evaluate the security and use of these MANPADS, and thus none of these MANPADS can be transferred to the FARC.

17. (S) Giovanni Snidle from WHA/FO said that he was pleased to be able to report to Ambassador Shannon that an investigation is ongoing into the Russian cartridges found with the FARC and that the U.S. would appreciate if the Russians shared the findings. Snidle expressed that the concerns were not Venezuela-specific, but a concern with the Western Hemisphere as a whole, noting that when new MANPADS were provided to the Venezuelans, it was possible that the older, excess MANPADS could be transferred to others in the region. He asked the Russians to consider the following parameters (also outlined in a non-paper provided in advance of the meeting) when signing MANPADS contracts with western hemisphere countries:

--Vehicle-mounted variants as opposed to shoulder-fired.  
--Limited numbers.  
--One-for-one replacement of old/outdated MANPADS.  
--Destruction of old stockpiles.

He stated that he was pleased to hear of the level of accountability and encouraged them to continue end-use assurances in future transfers.

The Russians noted that Venezuela didn't want vehicle mounted systems, it only requested shoulder-fired systems, and that the two systems are not interchangeable. Skabara agreed to take the suggestions on one-for-one replacement and stockpile destruction back to Moscow for consideration.

18. (S) ISN's Ann Ganzer asked about the "surprise inspections," mentioned to Secretary Clinton by Minister Lavrov. Skabara stated that these were not exactly surprise inspections. He explained that an inspection would be triggered if the GOR believed the contract had been violated or had information that indicated an inspection was necessary. (Comment: This is consistent with what the Russians have told us in previous MANPADS meetings. End Comment) He added that, to date, no inspections have been conducted and that no future inspections are scheduled. He did not consider the ammunition transferred to the FARC to be an indication that an inspection was warranted, as ammunition is not the same as MANPADS. He assured the U.S. side that the contract endowed the GOR with the right to perform a spontaneous inspection at any time. Costner noted that, if fully implemented, the surprise inspections would lessen the likelihood of a diversion and urged the GOR to perform these inspections regardless of the presence of a "triggering event."

19. (S) Skabara was receptive to U.S. inquiries on the exchange and its end-user controls and stated that if provided with specific questions, through diplomatic channels, they will be able to respond. The U.S. pointed out that it had already provided detailed questions in the non-paper, passed to the GOR in advance of the meeting, and that a written response to these inquiries would be appreciated. Skabara said that there had not been enough time to prepare a response to the paper, but that the answers could be provided in written form once they get back to Moscow. He sought a U.S. briefing on end-user controls in response. Skabara said that every state has a right to self defense under the United Nations Charter; however, the GOR is aware of the strategic, practical, and technical norms. He added that there is a line that should not be crossed, but that the MANPADS provided to Venezuela would not destabilize the region. He finished by stating that he could not get into details about any future shipments and highlighted that Russia is willing to engage in an open dialogue on this issue.

#### Horn Of Africa/Eritrea

10. (S) The U.S. delegation then raised the issue of Russian-made Eritrean MANPADS discovered in Somalia which was discussed at the Experts Meeting in 2008 (ref F). The Russian delegation confirmed that the MFA raised this issue with the Government of Eritrea (GOE), and had not revealed the U.S. as the source of the allegation. According to the Russian MFA representative the GOE denied that the transfer took place, accusing "enemies," namely Ethiopia, of fabricating the accusation. The GOE demanded further information on the transfer including the source and other supporting information (i.e. photographs). The U.S. delegation offered to discuss the question of photographs with relevant U.S. agencies and report back to the GOR through diplomatic channels. The Russian side then stated that its relationship with Eritrea is not strong, thus Russia cannot guarantee any further useful information on this issue.

11. (S) The U.S. delegation then reiterated a request from the 2008 Meeting for a detailed list of all Soviet and

Russian MANPADS transfers to Eritrea and the HOA in general. The Russian delegation responded that this was impossible, as all records of MANPADS transfers prior to the year 2000 were destroyed in accordance with Russian laws governing classified information. Further questioning by the U.S. delegation on this issue raised a series of translation problems. The Russian side did not understand requests from the U.S. delegation for "records" of these transfers. The Russian delegation stated that records of MANPADS transfers (but not serial numbers) after 2000 (possibly from 2003) may be available and offered to investigate the issue and report back via diplomatic channels. The Russians asked for a formal, written request on this issue. (Comment: Misunderstandings related to translation errors during this discussion may warrant a follow up with the GOR to confirm Skabara's statements. End Comment.)

#### Georgia

¶12. (S) The Russian delegation then raised the question of Georgian MANPADS proliferation. Skabara first outlined the GOR's concerns about the build-up of weapons in Georgia and potential "Georgian aggression" in the Caucasus. Skabara continued by invoking Section 5 of the Bilateral Arrangement where Russia and the U.S. are bound to the obligation of preventing the transfer of Polish MANPADS to Georgia. The Russian delegation acknowledged receipt of our non-paper in response to Russia's concerns and confirmed that the Russian MFA had begun a dialogue with the Polish government on this issue.

¶13. (S) Costner acknowledged the mutual interests the U.S. and Russian sides have, and the connection that exists between stemming MANPADS proliferation in Venezuela/Horn of Africa and the Caucasus, respectively. He noted the U.S. has raised concerns with the Georgian government on stockpile security and controls of excess munitions. He emphasized that the key difference lies in the fact that the U.S. has never transferred MANPADS to Georgia.

¶14. (S) Following Costner's remarks, EUR/PRA Office Director Anita Friedt added that the U.S. deeply regrets the loss of life on both the Georgian and Russian sides resulting from the August conflict. She underscored that the U.S. has not transferred MANPADS systems to Georgia and affirmed the USG policy of non-lethal weapon assistance to Georgia. She said the U.S. and Georgia had a strong nonproliferation partnership and expressed appreciation for Russian efforts to reach out to Poland on this issue. The Russian delegation reiterated its concerns on this issue, the importance of not blaming each other by continuing this dialogue, and requested that the U.S. continue to work with both Georgia and Poland.

¶15. (S) Skabara thanked the U.S. side for working with Poland and Georgia on this issue and stated that the GOR has had a pragmatic and active dialogue with Poland and hopes that in the future this dialogue will generate specific results on this question. Russia would continue to share the outcome of this dialogue with the U.S. in the future.

#### Black Markets in Latin America

¶16. (S/NF) The U.S. side then gave a briefing on the MANPADS black market in Latin America. The MANPADS black market in the region is small, the number of potential users is low, and prices are high compared to other regions such as the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. Central American countries historically have posed the largest proliferation risk because of the availability of systems unrecovered after civil conflicts in the 1980s. The U.S. side stated concerns about the FARC's apparent desire to obtain MANPADS, but said that the likelihood that they have already is very low. Specific instances where there would be heightened risk of proliferation could include when MANPADS are deployed to forward operating bases (as in the case of Venezuela). MANPADS are generally secure when they are in central stockpiles; however, when they are deployed they may be lost in combat, corruption, or to the black market. The U.S. side

reiterated that any proliferation to the FARC is important and is likely to lead to a significant increase in the air defense threat to Colombian and US aircraft operating in the region.

¶17. (S/NF) The U.S. briefing laid out possible steps to limiting illicit proliferation of MANPADS, including: inventory of existing stockpiles, avoidance of destabilizing-sized sales, destruction of old stockpiles, and limitations to the portability of systems. This complemented directly the U.S. requests for curbing the threat posed by sales to Venezuela, including offering vehicle- or pedestal-mounted variants rather than shoulder-fired systems.

¶18. (S/REL RUSSIA) The Russian side responded positively to the brief and asked if the U.S. exports MANPADS to South America. The U.S. side responded that the U.S. exports very few MANPADS anywhere and since at least 2005 (i.e., when the Arrangement was signed and quarterly transfer exchanges began) there has not been a single MANPADS transferred to South America. There are no STINGER MANPADS in South America and that obsolete, U.S. REDEYE MANPADS would have been pulled out years ago.

#### Regional Cooperation Efforts

¶19. (S) Snidle then gave a brief presentation on U.S. efforts with the OAS to provide for the security of MANPADS in Latin America. Snidle explained that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) had urged the region in 2004 to take concrete steps to protect themselves against MANPADS threats. The OAS states have since signed Resolution 2145 which urged them to adopt strict national MANPADS controls, ban transfers to non-state actors, destroy excess and unsecured weapons, and recommended physical security and stockpile management guidelines. The OAS produced a set of MANPADS regulations, originally written in four languages, to adhere to the resolution. Snidle urged the Russians to adhere to these guidelines when selling/transferring MANPADS to the region.

¶20. (S) For the final item of the first day, the Russian delegation responded by outlining its cooperation with CIS member states. According to the Russian delegation, the GOR has recently concluded frameworks for information exchange on MANPADS stockpile security measures in Uzbekistan and Ukraine, and is working to establish similar agreements in Moldova and Azerbaijan. The agreement with the Uzbeks has entered into force; the agreement with the Ukrainians was signed in May 2009 and is expected to enter into force this year. The GOR sought a similar arrangement with Georgia, but has not received a Georgian reply on this question since April 2008.

¶21. (SBU) On the second day of talks, Louis Ganem from ISN/CATR briefed on regional security seminars hosted by the U.S. for several regional partners. He provided information on how the United States coordinates and implements multinational conferences and seminars on small arms and light weapons, with a focus on MANPADS proliferation. Ganem explained that the seminars are designed to identify regional threats, common security goals, exchange information on security programs and training, identify requirements, and provide program assistance. He added that regional partners, sharing the same security goals, are invited to discuss how to improve existing and implement new regional security capabilities. The focus of such seminars is on identifying preventive security measures, such as export controls and border security programs and training to eliminate the risks of illicit proliferation. The intent is to improve regional security capabilities by promoting partnership and cooperation among partner nations. Ganem concluded contemplating the possibility of future events in South and Central Asia and Latin America, and asked the Russians to consider participation.

¶22. (S) The Russian delegation responded to this presentation positively, stating that they had sent



representatives, including Col. Kuts, to similar multilateral seminars in the CIS region. The Russians also agreed in principle that the U.S. and the GOR could potentially collaborate on future regional seminars. Skabara invited the U.S. to send proposals for future MANPADS seminars or similar events to the GOR for consideration.

#### Destruction Cooperation

¶23. (S) Costner then provided an update about U.S. destruction cooperation efforts with other states. Since 2003, the U.S. has helped destroy over 30,000 MANPADS missiles in 27 states, with approximately 4,000 destroyed since the last update provided at the 2008 meeting. The Russian delegation praised these efforts, and proposed that the U.S. and Russia collaborate on joint destruction projects in the future under the auspices of the Arrangement. The U.S. agreed that such efforts would be worthwhile, and expressed a willingness to look for opportunities for collaboration.

#### FINNPADS

¶24. (S) The U.S. delegation then followed-up with the Russian delegation about the transfer of Russian-made Finnish MANPADS to the U.S. for countermeasures testing. The Russian delegation stated that the GOR would agree to the transfer under two conditions: 1. that Russian experts be present for the tests, and 2. that the results of the tests be shared in writing with the GOR. This offer, and its decision to allow the transfer, had not yet been presented to the Finnish Government, as it represents a change in Russian policy on this question. Skabara highlighted the fact that the "new relationship" between the U.S. and Russia had inspired this change in policy. The Russian delegation was unable to provide further detail about the specifics of this proposal, such as how many Russian visits would be required or how thorough the report to the GOR would need to be. The U.S. requested that the GOR formally submit its decision, including its two conditions in writing. Both sides agreed to discuss further the details of the conditions and then inform the Finnish Government about the decision. (Comment: The Finns have almost 2,000 SA-16s and SA-18s to dispose of because of shelf life issues. This dialogue has been going on sporadically for almost two years; the first Russian response cited almost the same conditions as Skabara presented on July 10. End Comment.)

#### VERBA MANPADS

¶25. (S) The U.S. side provided the Russians with an open-source (2007) article that described a new Russian MANPADS system called the VERBA. Costner read key passages in the article to the Russian side, pointing out that the article suggests the VERBA would enter into service in 2008. The article also states that the VERBA will replace the STRELA and IGLA family of systems and have a payload twenty percent larger than either of its predecessors. Costner asked the Russian delegation to provide additional information on the VERBA, including if it was operational, and if it would be marketed.

¶26. (S) The Russian side responded that they had no further information. Skabara questioned the legitimacy of the article saying that scientists can "write whatever they want" and stated that there was no official position on the system. Skabara stated that if the U.S. wanted more information on this system, it would have to forward a written request through diplomatic channels with its questions. The U.S. agreed to do this.

#### Legislative updates

¶27. (S) Neither side had anything to report. Skabara stated that the GOR is on track to implement all of its legal mechanisms and before it develops new ones, wants to make sure they implement those they have.

## Conclusion

¶28. (S) Costner summarized the meeting and noted the following action items and "due-outs" by both sides ahead of the next meeting:

### U.S. side:

¶1. On Eritrea/Somalia, the U.S. will seek authorization to release photographic evidence of Russian MANPADS diversion to Somalia for the purpose of Russia following up with the Eritrean government.

¶2. On Finland, the U.S. will respond to Russia's conditions on participating in MANPADS destruction and countermeasure testing.

¶3. The U.S. will follow up on the open source article handed over and produce an official request for information regarding the VERBA MANPADS system.

### Russian side:

¶1. Official comments regarding U.S. proposal in the non-paper passed regarding exchange of destruction information, in particular our clarification on quantity and types of items to be reported.

¶2. On Venezuela, the Russian side promised to provide a written response to questions and recommendations made in our non-paper handed over prior to the meeting.

¶3. On VERBA MANPADS, written response to our official request for additional information, once it is received by the Russian side.

¶4. The Russian side will detail in writing its conditions, as described by the MFA during the meeting, regarding authorization for Finland to transfer Russian-origin MANPADS to the U.S. for countermeasure testing.

¶5. The transfer notice by the end of September covering the time period of April through June.

### Both sides:

¶1. The U.S. side will look into the possibility of having both sides brief each other on the conduct of our respective inspection regimes (derived from our discussion on Venezuela).

¶2. The delegations agreed that more work and dialogue needs to take place between the annual meetings and proposed a date of September 30, 2009 as a target date for having the due outs complete.

¶3. Propose dates for the next MANPADS Experts meeting, possibly to be held in Moscow in the fall of 2010.

The Russian side did not have anything to add regarding these due-outs. Skabara promised the Russian side would look into the matter of diverted ammunition to the FARC. He then requested that the U.S. provide pictures and cartridges found for technical analysis.

### Comment:

¶29. (S/NF) Both sides agreed the July 9-10 meeting was a success; the tone of the meeting was more positive than in previous years, consistent with the "reset" of U.S.-Russia relations. Two potentially unsettling differences from years past was the reduced size of the Russian delegation (only 2 from MOD, 1 from MFA) and a desire on the Russian side to extend the time before the next meeting to eighteen months or even two years. Both sides have settled on the routine and relatively less controversial elements of the Arrangement (such as information exchanges), but challenges remain on transparency over the more controversial issues we discussed, such as on Venezuela.

¶30. (S/NF) Comment continued: Both sides recognized the utility of holding a continuous dialogue on MANPADS issues through diplomatic channels and along the sidelines of other SA/LW meetings, such as the UN Biennial Meetings of States on SA/LW in New York in June of 2010. The Counter Terrorism Working Group (CTWG) would also present another opportunity for follow-up. Additionally, both sides indicated a willingness to deepen cooperation on MANPADS issues to include potential joint destruction programs, regional

seminars, and other bilateral efforts. These more robust programs would likely increase the utility of the Arrangement, as the sides broaden their MANPADS cooperation beyond the scope of info exchanges and an annual meeting. Yet, as Costner summed up in response to the Russian proposal to hold these meetings less frequently, it is much harder to play a game of chess by mail than in person. End comment.

### 31. (S/NF) Delegation List

#### U.S. Delegation:

DOS

Steven Costner (Deputy Director, PM/WRA), Co-Head of U.S. Delegation

Anita Friedt (Office Director, EUR/PRA), Co-Head of U.S. Delegation

Ann Ganzer (Acting DAS, ISN)

Stephanie Pico (PM/WRA)

Nate Young (EUR/PRA)

Louis Ganem (ISN/CATR)

Lindsay Gardner (PM/WRA)

Luke Champlin (EUR/PRA)

Giovanni Snidle (WHA/FO)

CIA/CTC

Eric Arnett

Nils Talbot

DOD

Kimberly Crusey

Trish Johnson

Rodney Ratledge

#### Russian Delegation:

MOD

Col. Oleg Skabara, Head of Delegation

Col. Andreiy Kuts

MFA

Denis Davydov

Russian Embassy

Alexei Markov

Maxim Elovik

CLINTON